<u>IN THE SPECIFICATION</u>

On page 1, directly above the first paragraph [01], please insert the following paragraph.

--RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application is a national phase application under 35 USC 371 of International Application PCT/US02/08345, filed March 20, 2002, which claims priority to U.S. Patent Application 10/023,332, filed December 17, 2001, and further claims priority to U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial No. 60/276,923, filed March 20, 2001, U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial No. 60/276,953, filed March 20, 2001, U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial No. 60/276,954, filed March 20, 2001, and U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial No. 60/276,955, filed March 20, 2001, and incorporated herein by reference in their entireties.

The present application is related to the following co-pending applications, which are assigned to the assignee of the present invention, and incorporated herein by reference in their entireties:

(1) U.S Patent Application Serial No. 10/023,331, filed December 17, 2001, entitled "VIRTUAL PRIVATE NETWORK (VPN)-AWARE CUSTOMER PREMISES EQUIPMENT (CPE) EDGE ROUTER;" and

(2) U.S Patent Application Serial No. 10/023,043, filed December 17, 2001, entitled "SYSTEM, METHOD AND APPARATUS THAT EMPLOY VIRTUAL PRIVATE NETWORKS TO RESIST IP QoS DENIAL OF SERVICE ATTACKS."

The following publications available through the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF) are also incorporated by reference in their entireties as background information:

(1) Branden, R., Clark D. and S. Shenker, "Integrated Services in the Internet Architecture: an Overview," IETF, RFC 1633, June 1994;
(2) Branden, R., Zhang, L., Berson, S., Herzog, S. and S. Jamin, "Resource ReSerVation Protocol (RSVP) – Version 1 Functional Specification," IETF, RFC 2205, September 1997;
(3) Blake, S., Black, D. Carlson, M., Davies, E., Wang, Z. and W. Weiss, "An Architecture for Differentiated Services," IETF, RFC 2475, December 1998;
(4) Rosen, E. and Y. Rekhter, "BGP/MPLS VPNs," IETF, RFC 2547, March 1999;
(5) Gleeson, B., Lin., A., Heinanen, J., Finland, T., Armitage, G. and A. Malis, "A Framework for IP Based Virtual Private Networks," IETF, RFC 2764, February 2000;
(6) Muthukrishnan, K. and A. Malis, "A Core MPLS IP VPN Architecture," IETF, RFC 2917, September 2000; and
(7) Bernet, Y., Ford, P., Yavatkar, R., Baker, F., Zhang, L., Speer, M., Braden, R., Davie, B., Wroclawski, J. and E. Felstaine, "A Framework for Integrated Services Operation over Diffserv Networks," IETF, RFC 2998, November 2000.--